

## **Supernatural evangelism**

**Proposition: Everyone who has the Holy Spirit is already empowered to be a witness for Jesus.**

**Q. In your row could you please come up with 7 things that the Holy Spirit does?**

If I were to ask you why the Holy Spirit was given to us as believers, you possibly could give me a list of maybe 20 things that the Holy Spirit was given to us for e.g. to lead us into righteousness, to teach us or to guide us, as a comforter, or to point us to Jesus, to set us free, to give us divine revelations and utterances. The list would be extensive.

But I want to suggest to you that there was one primary reason that the Holy Spirit was given. Turn to the person beside you and tell them what it is.

Listen again to what Jesus said just before he ascended back into the heavens, just before he went home again He said to a group of timid and amazed followers;

**Acts 1:4-10 (CEV)**

***(4) While he was still with them, he said: Don't leave Jerusalem yet. Wait here for the Father to give you the Holy Spirit, just as I told you he has promised to do. (5) John baptized with water, but in a few days you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit. (6) While the apostles were still with Jesus, they asked him, "Lord, are you now going to give Israel its own king again? (7) Jesus said to them, "You don't need to know the time of those events that only the Father controls. (8) But the Holy Spirit will come upon you and give you power. Then you will tell everyone about me in Jerusalem, in all Judea, in Samaria, and everywhere in the world."(9) After Jesus had said this and while they were watching, he was taken up into a cloud. They could not see him, (10) but as he went up, they kept looking up into the sky.***

That sounds a lot like the two great commissions:

## **Matthew 28: 18 - 20**

***(18) Jesus came to them and said: I have been given all authority in heaven and on earth! (19) Go to the people of all nations and make them my disciples. Baptize them in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, (20) and teach them to do everything I have told you. I will be with you always, even until the end of the world***

## **Mark 16:15-18**

***(15) Then he told them: Go and preach the good news to everyone in the world. (16) Anyone who believes me and is baptized will be saved. But anyone who refuses to believe me will be condemned. (17) Everyone who believes me will be able to do wonderful things. By using my name they will force out demons, and they will speak new languages. (18) They will handle snakes and will drink poison and not be hurt. They will also heal sick people by placing their hands on them.***

So many people think that only that small group of people who constantly see people won to Jesus and often do it through mass evangelism are evangelists and if I am not like the late Bill Subritzky or Nicky Gumbel or Ray Comfort etc I am not an evangelist and evangelism is not for me.

The thing is, in the Bible Jesus tells **All** of his followers to make disciples or to be his witnesses at home, outside your comfort area and to other ethnicities. He tells all of us to be witnesses and to make disciples. And some would say, Lord that is unfair, you didn't give me the gift of evangelism so how can I be part of the All that bears witness to you?

If you look at the great commissions and what Jesus said to the gathered faithful before he ascended, the Holy Spirit is going to be given so that you can be His witness as you go about the world doing life. How? Because he has given you all spiritual gifts. Jesus said all believers can force out demons, speak new languages, survive when attacked by poisonous snakes as Paul did, and heal sick people by placing their hands on them. Paul the apostle would go on to say that he wants everyone to desire to prophesy.

It would seem to me that while not all have public ministry gifts or have proven character and have developed one of the fivefold ministries of a mature Christian I do see however that according to scripture that all Christians can Prophesy, can hear Gods voice, can heal the sick and can cast out demons. And

because the Holy Spirit has come upon you, you can then by using His spiritual gifts be His witnesses locally, to people further afield who are similar and cross culturally. You may not have the ministry of an evangelist but because you have the Holy Spirit you can be involved in supernatural evangelism. I want to give you some examples of this.

A number of years ago our church for the month of May looked at Prophetic fishing. Because we can all hear the voice of God He can tell us who to speak to, when to say it and what to say to them. I have seen many in our church do this. Jesus as I go to Pak n' Save today or as I go to college please tell me what you want me to talk to and what to say? God honours that prayer. And so you may approach a random person, humbly and respectfully and give them a word from God and the results are really amazing. I met a man about a year ago who had come to a small group meeting with his Christian friend. He wanted to believe but needed to see evidence. Now there are a lot of people who are more practiced and fluent in prophecy than me but when I prayed for him and began telling him what God thought about him and what God specifically wanted to say to him about his secret situation with his partner he was blown away and said he wanted to follow Jesus. The demonstration of accurate prophecy witnessed to Him about the reality of God. Personally, in this generation where so many voices claim to know the truth I think it is quite reasonable that people see evidence of God's reality as we witness to Him through the gifts of the Holy Spirit.

What if, as you are going about the world just doing life, you made yourself sensitive to His voice and you said to the Lord, here I am Lord, send me, tell me who to speak to and what to say? God answers prayers like that where ever you are, and whatever you are doing. Any time and any place.

A read this quote to you a few weeks ago from a series I once taught on prophetic fishing. The author of a book by that name, Jean Blasi said. She said

Prophetic fishing evangelism is the result of supernatural living. Prophetic fishing springs from the realization that we do not have to work for God to bring others into the kingdom. Instead, we have to get out of the way and let God work through us. It involves getting into the flow of what God is doing and going with it.

I think that there is good biblical evidence that all Christians can prophecy as we can all hear from God, therefore why don't we who have the Holy Spirit,

stop trying to work for God, and just get close to Jesus and let Him work through us.

Not only does the Holy Spirit give us the gift of prophecy but God will also give people Words of knowledge and Words of Wisdom. No church is perfect and I don't believe that the Bethel church in America is perfect either but they have a staggering amount of good fruit from their ministry and I just love how they use the word of knowledge as a tool for evangelism. As part of training their people to be witnesses to the world they send them on treasure hunts. Before they go out into the community they ask them to sit down and ask God for a treasure map.

They firstly ask God to show them a location where someone will be open to the gospel.

They write down what God says.

Then they ask God for a person's name and write down what God says.

Then they will ask God for some distinguishing things about the person's appearance and write down His response.

Then they ask God for what the person may need prayer for and God might say a left ankle, their marriage, a tumour, a problem sleeping etc.

Finally they ask God for something unusual that would make that person stand out to them. And they write His response.

Then they go out looking for this 'treasure' who has been lost and that God is directing them to find through their 'treasure map' filled with words of knowledge.

The stories of the miraculous and lives transformed that come out of that church are just incredible. Now other than Paul looking for the Grecian man I don't see people doing 'treasure hunts in the bible' but I am absolutely convinced that every spiritual gift is meant primarily as a tool for witnessing and treasure hunting to me seems to have the right attitude to lost people and is a good way of getting into the lifestyle of hearing God's voice. All spiritual gifts help us witness.

Take Healing for instance. Again I have known so many people and certainly there are many people around the world who, when they hear that someone is

sick, they just say can I please pray for that. Most pre-Christians will say yes, even if they are not sure what you are going to do.

I always admire my wife when it comes to praying for people to be healed. There have been many positive stories. One that will always stick in my mind took place as she was at work in a secular kindergarten, i.e. one of those places where you are not supposed to mention religion, Christianity anyway. A Muslim lady shared with Juliette that she had been trying for years to get pregnant and it had been unsuccessful. She was terribly upset. My wife out of compassion immediately said can I pray for you. She said yes. Juliette prayed and 9 months later this lady came back and thanked Juliette for the miracle of a baby.

Jesus said that all Christians would be able to do supernatural things including casting out demons. **Deliverance ministry.** Now I am very pastorally orientated. I don't like to risk embarrassing people and so before deliverance ministry takes place I give the person a lot of teaching and following the ministry I tend to explain what now and how to stay free, and I personally do that in the privacy of my office or someone's home. I don't see however people casting out demons in the bible so carefully and politely as I do. In the Bible account when a follower of Jesus encountered a demonised person, often a demon causing some kind of sickness, Jesus, the disciples and the early church leaders would deliver a person of a demon right there and then in public and then give some counsel to the now set free person afterwards.

I can think of so many people, especially young people who have seen Bill Subritzky or Weston Carrier or seen some Christian cast demons out of folk publicly and as a result of what they saw, that is God's power over evil and the visible manifestations of that, they begin to believe. Four years ago when Ranui youth came back from Easter camp the greatest faith building experience they had had, was seeing people delivered of demons in front of them. That witness to the power of God was the greatest faith building factor for them in Easter camp 2013.

Here's my point this morning. The Holy Spirit was given to us for a whole range of reasons, to help us, to keep the church healthy etc, etc. Many people believe that only those gifted in evangelism need to do the work of an evangelist or a missionary; but Jesus' final words to All believers was that when the Holy Spirit came on them they would ALL be His witnesses, locally, to those that are similar to them and across the ethnicities of the world. That they would be His witnesses simply as they are going about life.

These signs will follow those that believe, they will be given the words to speak, they will cast out demons, and they will lay hands on the sick and heal them.

You and I are living in a country where Christians largely have bought into this unbiblical lie that you can witness without using words. That is a lie from the pit of hell. Faith comes from hearing and from hearing the revelatory word of God. Generally speaking we're living in a nation that doesn't believe in ultimate truth, that has become very politically correct and so we try not to say anything that might offend some one. It's almost as if the modern church in the west has become ashamed of the gospel of Jesus Christ which seems foolishness to those that are committed to sin but releases the power of God that brings salvation for those that believe.

Our neighbours, our kids, our relatives, our workmates, if we truly care about them, need to hear that there is a God, that some things are sinful and need to be repented of, that there is a heaven and a hell and they need to see evidence that the God we serve is real. When Jesus commissioned us ALL to be witnesses He did that by sending us the Holy Spirit so that we All could use the gifts and the faith that we have been given to help lost people encounter almighty God.

In **Romans 12:3-8** Paul encourages us to use the 'measure of faith' that we have. He goes on to encourage us to operate in the spiritual gifts in proportion to the faith that we have. You see, we all have the Holy Spirit if we are normal Christians. We all have been given spiritual gifts. Jesus said that all Christians had at least 4 and I would suggest to you we can operate in all 9 privately when those gifts are needed. We all have the Holy Spirit, we all have spiritual gifts. The problem is that we are not all that confident to prophecy over a stranger or to pray for a random person who is sick. Paul says to us operate according to the measure of faith that you have i.e. don't wait until you are a mini Bill Subritzky, if you are a Christian you need to start using the gifts that you have, you need to witness now. Start speaking, start acting, according to the measure of faith you have presently, and as you do that, you will find that God is faithful and witnessing is an adventure with God and your faith will grow. I like what the disciples said to Jesus when he told them to forgive 70 x 7. They didn't say Lord give us that faith, we can't do it. Instead they said to Jesus. Lord, please increase our faith.

There are times when gifts of faith are given when you can just trust God for a miracle in a situation that you would not normally be comfortable moving in.

But most of us need to begin to give away our faith in order to begin to increase our faith. Operate in the measure of faith that you have and God will increase that faith. When you see any lost person that the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit is searching for don't say Lord give me the faith to witness to that person. Don't ask for something that you already have. You have the Person of the Holy Spirit in you and on you. You already have what it takes to be a witness for Jesus already. What you need is a willingness to give away what you already have. I get so much out of the story of the feeding of the 5000 in **Matthew 14**. Jesus says to his hungry and tired disciples. You guys feed the multitude, just give them what you have. Yes, but Lord, we just have five loaves and two fishes, in other words we haven't got enough. Jesus then gave thanks and gave away what they did have, and a miracle took place that will never be forgotten.

Speaking about finance in **Luke 6** Jesus said "Give, and it will be given to you. A good measure, pressed down, shaken together and running over, will be poured into your lap. For with the measure you use, it will be measured to you. In other words, start using the faith that you have, give what you already possess and as you do, God will give back to us out of His resource house in heaven.

There are lots and lots of bored Christians in the west, often going from church to church looking for the 'meat' of the word. Some teaching that will really fire them up and make their Christian walk exciting.

In **John 4** we see Jesus talking to the Samaritan woman at the well. He and the boys were hungry and the boys went off to get some food for them to eat. When they return to find Jesus after Jesus had given a word of knowledge to this Samaritan woman as a witness to her, the boys are wondering why Jesus isn't hungry and keen to eat and Jesus says the most profound thing to them.

**John 4:34** Jesus said:

***My food (meat) is to do what God wants! He is the one who sent me, and I must finish the work that he gave me to do.***

Stepping out in faith, witnessing to people in the power of the Spirit, living a prophetic life where He was guided by the Holy Spirit's voice, that said Jesus is where you get the real food from, that is when your faith becomes alive and vital.

Friends, God loves lost people! They are like a lost sheep, or a lost coin, or a lost son to Him. They are a treasure to Him. He is searching for the open ones constantly. Because the Holy Spirit has come upon you, All of you can be His witnesses this week. I encourage you to get really close to Jesus and let him guide you in how you can use your gifts to witness to lost people. Just step out with the gifts and the measure of faith you already have and start giving it away. You will find that God is faithful. Your Christian walk will really come alive.

Jesus said to all of us 'Go'. Will you take the risk? Do you love lost people enough?

Will you enter the adventurous lifestyle that God wants for All of us?

You already have what you need. Now it's time to step out.